

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00  
DODE-00 NSCE-00 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 /052 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/AND:AALLITTO:JD  
APPROVED BY ARA:FMCNEIL  
-----021706 042314Z /66

O R 042251Z MAY 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY QUITO IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 114311

FOR THE CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, EC

SUBJECT: ECUADOR'S ELECTIONS

REF: QUITO 3847 (NOTAL)

1. DURING AMBASSADOR YCAZA'S LUNCH FOR MCNEIL AND ALLITTO, WE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE IN LOW-KEY BUT STRAIGHTFORWARD FASHION OUR CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT THE REPORTED DETERIORATION OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS DESIGNED TO RETURN ECUADOR TO DEMOCRACY.

2. MCNEIL NOTED THAT WHEN ASSAD BUCHARAM WAS DISQUALIFIED IN FEBRUARY, THE MAJOR POLITICAL SECTOR HE REPRESENTED FOUND ANOTHER CANDIDATE TO CARRY ITS STANDARD AND THE PROCESS CONTINUED ON TRACK. BUT NOW IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT APPEARS TO BE  
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THE IMMINENT DISQUALIFICATION OF TWO MORE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AND THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF THE TICKET REPRESENTING BUCHARAM'S POLITICAL CONSTITUENCY. WE WOULDN'T PRESUME TO GO INTO THE LEGAL QUESTIONS, BUT IF THE AUTHORITIES KEEP DISQUALIFYING CANDIDATES, SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY THE PROCESS WILL WIND UP DENYING SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL SECTORS PARTICIPATION

IN THE ELECTIONS. THE PICTURE IS FURTHER CLOUDED BY THE REPORTED RESIGNATIONS OF ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL MEMBERS AND THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY YET ANOTHER (AND MAJOR) CANDIDATE, DURAN, THAT HE MIGHT WITHDRAW ON HIS OWN BECAUSE HE SCENTED A POLITICAL MANEUVER BEHIND THESE DISQUALIFICATIONS.

3. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WANTED ECUADOR'S PLANS TO SUCCEED. OUR CONCERN WAS THAT THE PROCESS SUDDENLY APPEARED IN DANGER OF BEING DISCREDITED BY THE POSSIBILITY OF THE EFFECTIVE EXCLUSION OF IMPORTANT SECTORS OF THE POPULACE. THE U.S. OF COURSE DOES NOT REPEAT NOT SUPPORT ANY PARTY OR CANDIDATE, INCLUDING THE THREE WHO REPORTEDLY MIGHT BE DISQUALIFIED, PANCHO HUERTA, HURTADO AND CALDERON. BUT WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THE PROCESS AND THE PROSPECT THAT IF IT WERE DISCREDITED IT WOULD LEAD TO DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES AND, AMONG OTHER THINGS, DAMAGE TO THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY'S PRESTIGE. IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF THE PROCESS TURNED SOUR, PARTICULARLY IN A COUNTRY WITH SUCH A FINE RECORD OF RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS. THE U.S. WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT PRESCRIBE POLITICAL FORMULAS BUT WE SUPPORTED DEMOCRACY AND WANTED THEM TO UNDERSTAND OUR CONCERN FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PROCESS AND OUR VIEW THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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AVOID DISENFRANCHISING MAJOR SECTORS OF THE POPULACE.

4. ECUADOR'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD AND ITS EFFORTS TO RETURN THE COUNTRY TO DEMOCRACY HAVE PROMPTED US TO MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO BE RESPONSIVE, E.G., MILITARY PURCHASES, RENEWED ACCESS TO THE IDB'S SOFT LOAN WINDOW, ETC. BUT IF THE DEMOCRATIC NATURE OF THE PROCESS IS TAINTED, IT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT TO JUSTIFY THE CONTINUANCE OF THESE SPECIAL EFFORTS.

5. YCAZA AND HIS MINISTER, SEVILLA BORJA, REPLIED WITH WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE STANDARD GOE RESPONSE (I.E., PARA FIVE OF REFTEL) AND CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING OPTIMISM THAT THESE PROBLEMS WOULD SORT THEMSELVES OUT, AND THAT THERE WOULD BE REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS AND A TRANSITION TO A DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED CIVILIAN REGIME THIS YEAR. YCAZA PROMISED TO INFORM HIS GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY OF THE CONVERSATION. PLEASE CONTINUE WITH YOUR OWN EFFORTS. WE SUGGEST IN PARTICULAR THAT YOU SEEK

AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE OUR CONCERNS, ALONG  
THE LINES SET FORTH HERE, WITH PRESIDENT POVEDA. CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DEMOCRACY, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 04 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Review Markings:**  
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